Shifting Parties, Sophisticated Switchers

Are Voters Responding to Ideological Shifts by Political Parties?[1]

Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association
28-31 August 2014
Washington D.C.

Ruth Dassonneville[*]
Benjamin Ferland[**]

ABSTRACT

The trend towards increasing electoral volatility has triggered a rich literature investigating which voters are most likely to switch parties in subsequent elections. Less is known, however, on the role parties play in causing voters to switch parties. From a Downsian perspective we assume that changes in parties' ideological positions should cause voters to switch parties from one election to another. The current paper addresses these shortcomings in the literature by bringing together literature on volatility and research on responsiveness to political party. For doing so, we make use of the data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project. The results presented in this paper show that parties' ideological shifts are indeed causing voters to switch parties. The extent to which this mechanism of accountability functions, however, is partly dependent on individual- as well as contextual-level factors.

KEYWORDS

comparative politics; elections, volatility, political sophistication, voter responsiveness

---

[1] A previous version of this paper was presented at the 'Citizens, Parties and Electoral Contexts' pre-IPSA workshop, Montréal, 18 July 2014. We thank the participants for their helpful comments and we are especially grateful to Patrick Fournier for his insights and suggestions.

[*] Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, KU Leuven, Parkstraat 45 box 3602, B-3000 Leuven. ruth.dassonneville@soc.kuleuven.be.

[**] Department of Political Science, McGill University, 855 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Quebec H3A 2T7. benjamin.ferland@mail.mcgill.ca.

1. INTRODUCTION

Even though the founding fathers of electoral research were already intrigued by voters who switch parties and their characteristics (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1964; Converse, 1962), a number of questions on the mechanisms causing voters to switch parties remain. As a prime example, the debate on how political sophistication relates to electoral volatility is still on-going (Dassonneville & Dejaeghere, 2014; Kuhn, 2009; Lachat, 2007). In this paper, we shed new light on this question by taking into account shifts at the party level, an element that has been overlooked by previous research.

The importance of investigating what the link between sophistication and volatility is, lies in the normative implication of whether it is the high or low politically sophisticated who are most likely to switch parties. In elections, the balance of power rests with those voters who switch parties. Ideally, therefore, these switches are based on well-considered decisions by knowledgeable and interested citizens (Granberg & Holmberg, 1990).

Investigating this research puzzle, previous research has addressed the question of whether it is high or low sophisticated voters who switch parties most (Dassonneville, 2012, 2014; Kuhn, 2009; Lachat, 2004). Others have drawn attention to the ideological distance bridged by voters switching parties and the need to take into account whether voters switch to ideologically close or more distant parties (Dassonneville & Dejaeghere, 2014; van der Meer, Lubbe, van Elsas, Elff, & van der Brug, 2012). In this paper, we claim that all of these studies are overlooking a crucial element by not taking into account shifts at the party level when assessing the characteristics of floating voters. The assumption in research on the link between political sophistication and volatility is simply that high sophisticates make well-considered decisions and low sophisticates don't. Instead of making that inference, we more directly investigate the actual mechanism that makes voters switch parties from one election to another. For concluding whether or not party switchers are *whimsical* (van der Meer, Elsas, Lubbe, & Van der Brug, 2014), it does not suffice to look at how politically sophisticated voters are. What we should investigate is the extent to which voters are responding to parties' behaviour – i.e. the extent to which voters change their vote as parties shift their position.

The theoretical foundations for bringing parties into research on the causes of electoral volatility are to be found in the responsible party model (Arnold & Franklin, 2012; Sartori, 1968). There is strong empirical evidence pointing out that parties and their voters do have largely similar ideological opinions (Costello, Thomassen, & Rosema, 2012; Dalton, 1985). Furthermore, this correlation has been shown to be dynamic and so in two ways. Parties have been found to adjust their positions in response to the electorate and citizens were found to be responding to parties changing stances as well (Adams, Ezrow, & Leiter, 2012; Adams, Ezrow, & Somer-Topcu, 2014; Adams & Somer-Topcu, 2009; Fortunato & Stevenson, 2013). The latter phenomenon is what we assume to be an important causal mechanism explaining why voters change parties from one election to another.

We first discuss previous research on electoral volatility and why political sophistication is regularly looked at for understanding the causes and consequences of volatility. In a next section, we elaborate on why we expect ideological shifts at the party-level to be of importance in this debate. After formulating our hypotheses, we present the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, which is the data source used for investigating this question. We subsequently present our results and we end with some conclusions of the implications of our findings and thoughts for further research.

2. UNSOPHISTICATED SWITCHERS?

The question whether party switching is an expression of high or low political sophistication and involvement has been a source for debate in the literature on voting behaviour ever since the 1950s. Berelson *et al*. (1954) investigated the characteristics of voters changing parties in the course of an electoral campaign and came to the conclusion that *"Stability in vote is characteristic of those interested in politics and instability of those not particularly interested"* (Berelson et al., 1954: 20). This observation, which has been coined as 'the floating voter hypothesis', has consequently sparked a normatively loaded debate on the link between political sophistication and volatility. These findings have been interpreted as being at odds with what an ideal type democracy should look like. If Berelson and his colleagues have it right, the implication is that alterations in election results and therefore in governance are driven by changes among the least interested part of the electorate (Granberg & Holmberg, 1990).

Further studies on the link between volatility have refined the original 'floating voter hypothesis' somewhat. It has been argued and empirically found to be valuable to think of a non-linear relation between political sophistication and volatility. Low sophisticated voters are unlikely to perceive a lot of political information and hence thought to rely on habitual cues, leading to stability in voting behaviour. High sophisticates on the other hand, do receive a lot of political information, but their well-developed political attitudes are assumed to make them resistant to changing their behaviour accordingly. As a consequence, it is the middle sophisticated who are thought and found to be most likely to switch parties – either during a campaign period or from one election to another (Converse, 1962; Kuhn, 2009; Lachat, 2007).

A second refinement can be found in the work of Russell Dalton (1984, 2012, 2013), who claims that electorates have changed fundamentally since the early voting studies were published. According to Dalton, a group of high cognitively mobilised apartisans has emerged. This group of voters is politically sophisticated and for that reason does not have to rely on partisanship to guide vote choices. Instead, these voters are free to choose independently and from one election to another what party to vote for. As a consequence, volatility in recent decades can be related to high levels of interest and involvement in politics, which would fit to the democratic ideal (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002). Dalton's theoretical accounts, however, are contested in a number of studies pointing out that the empirical evidence points in opposite directions (Albright, 2009; Dassonneville, Hooghe, & Vanhoutte, 2012, 2014; Marthaler, 2008).

Thirdly, some nuance has been added to the debate by scholars pointing out that even though levels of volatility can be substantial, most switching is still confined to particular ideological blocs (Bartolini & Mair, 1990; van der Meer et al., 2012; van der Meer et al., 2014). Taking into account the directionality of switching, these studies furthermore indicate that only switching between ideologically distant parties is clearly linked to low levels of political sophistication (Dassonneville & Dejaeghere, 2014; van der Meer et al., 2014).

Regardless of the refinements made, all research investigating the link between political sophistication and volatility shares the same underlying assumption. It is thought that if volatility is associated to high levels of political sophistication or involvement in politics, this would foster what is generally referred to as a democratic ideal of voters judging *"candidates*

and parties on their policies and governmental performance" (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002: 60)

3. PARTY POSITION SHIFTS

High sophisticated party switchers could indeed be argued to be a necessary condition for volatility to advance the democratic ideal. We argue, however, that merely looking at levels of political sophistication, interest or involvement is not sufficient for drawing strong conclusions in this debate. From a Downsian perspective on voting, voters need not be fully informed on parties' positions or the issues at stake to make rational decisions (Downs, 1957). Instead, what we should investigate is therefore whether party switching results from voters' assessment of how the government has performed or voters' judgements of parties' policies and ideological positions (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002). It is this latter consideration that is central in this paper.

For the assumption that party switching is indeed driven by ideological shifts of parties to be a possibility, three conditions should be met. First, that voters do vote for parties that have ideological positions that closely match their own opinions. Second, that parties change their positions from one election to another. And third, that voters perceive change when parties shift their ideological positions or policies. The literature offers evidence validating each of these three conditions.

First, in representative democracies, it is deemed essential that parties' ideological positions are consistent with how their voters think about policy. According to the 'responsible party model' sufficient ideological congruence between citizens and parties ensures a link between the public opinion and policy (Adams et al., 2014; Costello et al., 2012; Dalton, 1985). Strong empirical evidence does substantiate the claim that voters have policy opinions that closely match the positions of the parties they vote for (Costello et al., 2012; Dalton, 1985).

Second, parties have previously been found not to be inert actors, but to change ideological and policy positions over time. Different mechanisms are generally referred to as why parties do so. Somer-Topcu (2009) for example found parties winning elections to be less likely to subsequently change positions than parties losing elections are. Adams and his colleagues, by contrast, do not find indications of parties responding to previous election results by changing

their ideologies (Adams, Clark, Ezrow, & Glasgow, 2004) Furthermore, parties have been found to react to competing parties, with Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009) for example showing that parties tend to shift positions in the same direction as their rivalling parties have done before. Importantly, parties have been found to change positions as a reaction to changes in public opinion as well (Adams et al., 2004; Budge, 1994). As a refinement to this observation, while mainstream parties are generally responding to the mean voter, niche parties are sensitive to changes among their own supporters instead (Ezrow, De Vries, Steenbergen, & Edwards, 2010).

Third, evidence accumulates showing that citizens do perceive change when parties shift policy positions (Adams et al., 2014; Fortunato & Stevenson, 2013). Even though voters do not seem to respond to changes in manifestos or to shifts communicated through campaign communication (Adams, Ezrow, & Somer-topcu, 2011), voters are responding to perceptions of change –as for example observed by experts as well (Adams et al., 2014). It has also been shown that voters react more strongly to changes as observed through actual policies than through (election) promises and that when parties are in a governmental coalition, this fact acts as a heuristic for voters to perceive how parties change ideologies (Fortunato & Stevenson, 2013).

In sum, it seems as if all conditions are met for volatility to potentially be driven by voters responding to ideological shifts of parties. Tavits (2007) has indeed shown that –at an aggregate level– ideological shifts have an impact on the electoral results of parties, albeit only positively so if parties shift on pragmatic issues. It remains to be seen, however, whether at an individual-level as well, we can observe a link between ideological shifts of parties on the one hand and party switching by voters on the other.

A Downsian framework of vote maximization makes us think of two related mechanisms that would link parties' ideological shifts to shifts by voters. First, a voter can feel that a party she voted for no longer represents her interests because of the party's changed policy positions. The voter can then decide to *leave* that party. Second, parties are thought to change positions because they hope to attract new voters (Downs, 1957; Williams, 2014). Consequently, as parties move positions and come closer to the ideological position of a voter of another party, this voter can decide to *move towards* this party. The overview of the literature makes clear

that there are a number of reasons to assume that parties' shifts are indeed a driving mechanism for volatility, which leads to our first hypotheses.

H1a The more the previously voted party shifts ideologically away from a voter, the higher the probability that the voter *switches away* from this party.

H1b The more another party shifts ideologically towards a voter, the higher the probability that a voter *switches towards* this party.

While we expect these hypotheses to hold in general, we also think it is essential to take into account aspects of heterogeneity for gaining insights in how party shifts affect individual-level volatility. As a first aspect, we have to take into account the likely conditioning effect of political sophistication on the link between party shifts and volatility. Perceiving parties' ideological positions and shifts therein, can be assumed to require a certain level of political sophistication. Analogous to what has been found with regard to economic voting and performance voting (De Vries & Giger, 2014; Gomez & Wilson, 2001), we hypothesize that higher levels of political sophistication lead to more ideological responsiveness and to a higher probability to subsequently switch parties due to parties' ideological shifts. As this should hold for both moving towards as well as moving away from a party, we formulate one general hypothesis.

H2 The more politically sophisticated is a voter, the stronger the relation between parties' ideological shifts and the voter's probability to switch parties.

In addition to individual-level heterogeneity conditioning the impact of parties' shifts on volatility, we expect party-level characteristics to be influential factors as well. In parliamentary systems, it is the parties in governments that dominate the policy-making process by proposing and implementing policies (Laver & Shepsle, 1996). Opposition parties may have some influence on government policies as well, but that depends upon the majority or minority status of the government and whether the latter is formed by a coalition of parties or not (Powell, 2000: 51-55). In general, however, incumbent parties strongly control the legislative agenda in parliamentary system (Tsebelis, 2002). Given that voters' perceptions of the ideological position of parties are strongly influenced by parties' behaviour in office (Adams et al., 2014; Fortunato & Stevenson, 2013), the actions of incumbent parties should be more salient to voters than opposition parties' behaviour. Consequently, our assumption is

that voters will more easily perceive a party shift when it is an incumbent party than when the party is in opposition. This assumption also relies on a conception of elections as an instrument for citizens to hold their government accountable for their actions (Powell, 2000; Przeworski, Stokes, & Manin, 1999). When a government drifts away from its initial promises – e.g. when its changes ideological position – its supporters may well punish it by switching parties. Similarly, government parties can change positions, moving towards those who earlier did not vote for them. These voters can just as well reward the incumbent parties by switching towards the parties in office.

H3a The relation between parties' ideological shifts and volatility is stronger for incumbent parties than for opposition parties.

Furthermore, there are reasons to think that the type of government that is in office is of relevance as well. Scholars have previously argued that the accountability mechanism is more difficult to achieve under coalition governments than under single-party majority governments (Fisher & Hobolt, 2010; Powell & Whitten, 1993; Powell, 2000). The reason is that in case of a coalition of parties only one policy is adopted for a given issue resulting from a compromise between parties (Martin & Vanberg, 2014) while each party is held accountable separately at election time. The fact that multiple parties are responsible for the overall government direction makes it difficult for voters to weigh the responsibility of each party separately. As a result, economic and retrospective voting are generally less important under coalition governments than is the case for single-party majority governments (Fisher & Hobolt, 2010; Powell & Whitten, 1993). For these reasons, ideological shifts by parties in coalition governments are blurred by the other signals sent from the government as a whole but also by the other coalition members. We thus expect the relation between parties' ideological shifts and volatility to be stronger for parties in a single-party government than for incumbent parties in a coalition government.

H3b The relation between parties' ideological shifts and volatility is stronger for parties in a single-party government than for parties in a coalition government.

4. DATA AND METHODS

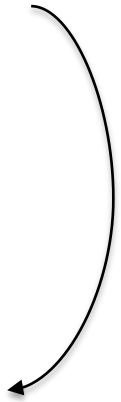
In order to test the hypotheses, we use the data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) covering the 2001-2011 period. One of the main advantages of the CSES dataset is that respondents were surveyed in several countries in a standardized way. It is the comparative feature of the data – with multiple countries and hence party systems covered – that renders the CSES the ideal dataset to investigate the effect of party-level factors on volatility. We limit the analyses to countries were a sufficient number of consecutive elections is covered by election surveys in order to allow measuring shifts in party positions (see below). As a result, the focus of the current paper is on voting behaviour in advanced industrial democracies. Overall, the analyses cover 22,679 respondents in 23 elections that took place in the following countries: Australia, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Great Britain.

As parties do react to each other as well (Williams, 2014) it could be considered essential to take into account all dynamics in the party system and how voters react to these movements. To this end we have transformed the data into a stacked data matrix of respondent-party dyads. As such, we can model the reactions of voters to all ideological shifts in the party system. As a clarification for this stacking procedure, look at Figure 1 below. Voter x voted for party C in the current election and for party B in the previous election. In the transformed data-matrix, this is represented by twice not voting (0) for party A, voting for party B in the previous election (1) but not doing so in the current election (0) and not voting for party C in the previous election (0), but doing so in the current election (1).

Figure 1. Transformation to a stacked data-matrix of voter-party dyads in a context with three parties (A, B and C)

Original data file

	Previous vote	Current vote
Voter x	B	C
Voter y	A	A
Voter z	A	C



Transformed data - Voter-Party dyads

	Previous vote	Current vote
Voter x – Party A	0	0
Voter x – Party B	1	0
Voter x – Party C	0	1
Voter y – Party A	1	1
Voter y – Party B	0	0
Voter y – Party C	0	0
Voter z – Party A	1	0
Voter z – Party B	0	0
Voter z – Party C	0	1

4.1 MEASURES AND EXPECTATIONS

The dependent variable for testing the hypotheses is a categorical variable constructed based on the information in the stacked data matrix and has four outcome options. The value of the dependent variable is 0 if a voter stable voted for the same party (e.g. voter y and party A in Figure 1), its value is 1 if a voter stable not voted for this party (e.g. voter y and party B in Figure 1), its value is 2 if a voter is switching *away* from a party (e.g. voter x and party B in Figure 1) and its value is 3 if a voter switches *towards* a party (e.g. voter x and party C in Figure 1).

For information on the party previously voted for, we make use of a recall question of previous voting behaviour.[2] Such a question was included in Modules 2 and 3 of the CSES project. Relying on information obtained from recall questions to study volatility, we have to acknowledge that these are imperfect measures. Previous research has indicated that the use of recall questions leads to an underestimation of volatility, due to memory problems or because voters adjust their recalled vote to be in line with their current preference (Van Der Eijk & Niemöller, 1983; Waldahl & Aardal, 2000). Furthermore, the extent to which

[2] By relying on scientific election reports of each of the elections covered, we can take into account splits and mergers of parties when constructing this measure of party switching. See Dassonneville & Dejaeghere (2014) for more details.

respondents correctly recall their previous vote is most likely to be correlated to variables that are usually linked to party switching. As Converse (1962: 580) has indicated, *"The same theory which predicts that the less involved are more susceptible to change suggests that the less involved will also give less accurate accounts of past political behaviour"*. The lack of comparative panel studies on election behaviour, however, renders the use of cross-sectional data and recalled vote choices the only option for investigating our research question. In the estimation sample, 29.7% of respondents report to have switched parties at the current election (standard deviation of 0.46).

In order to assess the impact of ideological shifts in party positions on respondents' likelihood of switching parties, we compute whether and to what extent the ideological distance between a respondent's position and a party's ideological position at the current election has changed since the previous election. We thus construct a delta-measure (Δ) of change in ideological positions by subtracting the absolute distance between a voter and a party at time t from the absolute distance between the voter and the party at time t-1. Consequently, a negative Δ distance value implies that the party is shifting towards the voter's position, while a positive Δ distance value implies that a party is shifting away from her. The question used in the CSES dataset to locate respondents' left-right position is: "In politics people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?". Respondents were also asked to locate each party on the same left-right scale. For each party, we compute the median position has perceived by all respondents.[3] By using perceived positions, we take into account previous research pointing out that voters do not react to manifestos but do react to perceived ideological positions (Adams et al., 2014). Note that for computing parties' shifts from one election to another we only use elections that were consecutive. To increase the number of consecutive elections we use data from Module 1 of the CSES dataset and we complement this with national election studies that ask respondents to locate each party on a left-right scale.[4]

[3] Note that we follow Warwick's procedure (2011) and transform the parties' left-right position into a continuous variable. For each respondent, we add a random number following a uniform distribution with mean zero varying from -0.5 to 0.5. For instance, respondents who located a party at 4 on the left-right scale are now distributed uniformly over the 3.5-4.5 interval. The main implication is that instead of having party positions for each country located at position 4, 5 or 6 as is usually the case, we get party positions for each country that are more reflective of a real continuous distribution.

[4] These are Australia (2001, Australian Election Studies), Denmark (2005, Danish Election Projects – Dansk Data Arkiv), Great Britain (2001, British Election Study), Netherlands (2003, Dutch Parliamentary Election Study) and New Zealand (1999, and 2005 New Zealand Election Studies).

Our expectation is that *Δ distance* will have a positive impact on a respondent's likelihood moving away from a party (*H1a*). This would indicate that if the respondent's party has moved away ideologically from the respondent, she is more likely to desert that party. Furthermore, we expect *Δ distance* to have a negative impact on a respondent's likelihood to move towards a party (H1b). That observation would indicate that as a party shifts away from a voter, this voter is less likely to switch to this party. Note that there is no recall question on respondents' ideological position at the previous election. A major limitation of the cross-sectional nature of our data is consequently that we cannot take into account possible shifts from the part of voters themselves. As a result, we can only shed light on one side of the story of ideological shifts affecting voting behaviour.

We expect the impact of *Δ distance* on the likelihood of switching to be conditioned by individual and party-level characteristics. To measure a respondent's level of political sophistication, different operationalizations have been suggested in the literature. A number of scholars have pointed out that political knowledge is probably the best single indicator measuring political sophistication (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Lachat, 2007). We hence use the three political knowledge questions provided in the CSES data set and combine them. For each respondent, we sum the number of correct answers and divided this by the average number of correct answers in the respondent's country-election sample. This procedure accounts for the cross-national variation in level of respondents' political knowledge (Singh and Thornton 2013). We expect the interaction between *sophistication* and *Δ distance* to have a positive impact on the likelihood to switch away from a party and a negative impact on the probability to switch towards a party. Higher levels of sophistication should hence strengthen the main effects of *Δ distance* on switching away from and towards a party.

Finally, the CSES dataset provides the number of cabinet portfolios hold by each party before and after elections. Based on this information, we compute a dummy variable coded one if a party was in *government* before the election. We also create a variable for whether this party was part of a *single-party* or a *coalition government*. We expect the interaction between *government* and *Δ distance* to have a positive impact on switching away from a party, and a negative impact on switching towards a party. This would be indicating that the impact of parties' ideological shifts on respondents' likelihood of switching is greater if the party was in government (*H3a*). We also expect the interaction between *single-party government* and *Δ distance* to be positive and greater than the interaction between *coalition government* and *Δ*

distance for moving away from a party and negatively so for moving towards a party. This would be indication that the impact of parties' ideological shifts is greater for voters who supported a party in a single-party government than a party in a coalition government (*H3b*).

Testing these individual-level hypotheses we obviously control for a number of factors that can be thought to lead to volatility. Aside from socio-demographic variables (age, sex, education), the models also include a number of variables that have regularly been linked to volatility. First, we control for a respondent's level of political sophistication. A number of different expectations have been formulated in the literature but recent studies empirically point out to a curvilinear link, with the highest probability of switching among the middle sophisticated (Dassonneville & Dejaeghere, 2014; Kuhn, 2009; Lachat, 2007). Second, we control for respondents' levels of satisfaction with democracy and political efficacy, as previous research has pointed out that volatility is an expression of political disaffection (Dassonneville, 2012; Zelle, 1995). Obviously, we also control for the impact of partisanship on volatility, as voters who identify with a particular party are also less likely to switch parties from one election to another. Additionally, given that partisanship can act as a lens for processing political information (Bartels, 2002; Zaller, 1992), controlling for partisanship can be considered essential when investigating the impact of parties' ideological shifts on voters' behaviour. Finally, the models also account for the ideological distance between each party and a voter given that greater distance should reduce the likelihood of switching parties. [see Appendix on how all of these variables are measured]

4.2. METHOD

The data have a hierarchical structure, with respondent-party dyads nested in respondents, respondents nested in elections and these elections nested in countries. A number of modelling approaches can be taken to take this nested structure into account. Our variables of interest are all situated at the party-respondent or individual-level, we hence control for the election-level by means of the inclusion of election-specific dummies. Further, the nesting of dyads within individuals is accounted for by the presentations of cluster-robust standard

errors.[5] Since the dependant variable is categorical we use multinomial logistic regressions to assess the impact of the independent variables on the likelihood of switching parties (or not).

The results of a multinomial logistic regression could be difficult to interpret since the impact of the regression coefficients are relative to the category of reference of the dependent variable. A better way to interpret the impact of the different variables is thus to examine directly their marginal effects on each category of the dependent variable. In the results section, we therefore present the marginal effects in percentage points associated with our variables of interest. The full results of the multinomial logistic regressions are displayed in appendix.

5. RESULTS

In Table 1, we test the impact of our main hypotheses – that a party shifting away from a voter increases her likelihood of switching away from this party (*H1a*) and decreases her likelihood of switching towards this party (*H1b*). In Table 1, we present the marginal effects of Δ *distance* on a voter's likelihood of realizing each of the four outcome categories of the dependent variable (stable vote, stable non-vote, switching away, and switching towards). The results provide some evidence supporting our rationales. Even if Δ *distance* does not have a positive impact on the likelihood of switching away as we expected (*H1a*) – the impact is negative and not statistically significant – the impact of Δ *distance* on the other outcomes are all in the expected directions. Consistent with *H1b*, the marginal effect of Δ *distance* on the likelihood of switching towards a party is negative and statistically significant at the 0.001 level. This indicates that as a party is moving away from a voter one unit on the left-right scale, the likelihood that a voter will switch towards this party decreases by 1.20 percentage points. Moreover, the impact of Δ *distance* on the likelihood of a stable vote and a stable non-vote as well are in expected directions. The negative marginal effect of Δ *distance* on stable vote indicates that a voter is less likely to remain voting a party when the latter is moving away from the voter's ideological position. On the other hand, the positive marginal effect of Δ *distance* on stable non-vote indicates that as the other parties (the ones a voter did not vote for at the last election) move away from the voter, the latter is more likely to continue not

[5] We are obviously aware of the fact that robust-standard errors do not 'fix' problems that come with a nested structure (King & Roberts, 2012). The size of the dataset, however (with an N of over 120,000 at the dyad level), combined with the three-level structure and the multinomial logit specification, complicate the estimation of random intercept and random slopes specification of the current models. It remains to be seen whether our results are robust to such specifications in future versions of this paper.

voting for them at the current election. Overall, it seems therefore, as if volatility is indeed – partly – driven by the fact that voters respond to parties, since the probability that a voter switches parties (or not) is a function to whether parties move away from her in between elections.

Table 1: Marginal Effects of Δ Distance and Distance$_{t-1}$ on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable vote		Stable non-vote		Switching away		Switching towards	
Δ **distance**	-2.32	(0.19)***	3.73	(0.24)***	-0.22	(0.14)	-1.20	(0.14)***

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p<0.01$; * $p<0.05$. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. The marginal effects are percentage points. See Table A in appendix for the full results of the multinomial logistic regression.

In a next step, we examine whether the impact of Δ *distance* is conditioned by individual and party-level factors. First, in order to test the conditioning impact of *political sophistication*, *political sophistication* is interacted with Δ *distance* in Table 2. Contrary with our expectation (*H2*), the marginal effect of the interaction is not statistically different from 0 for the likelihood of switching away or towards a party. These results indicate that the more sophisticated are not more likely to switch parties when the parties are moving towards or away from them, which would imply that parties' ideological shifts are equally visible for all voters. However, the impact of Δ *distance* is slightly larger as sophistication increases with regard to casting a stable vote and a stable non-vote. This is clear from the negative and positive marginal effects of the interaction effects under *stable vote* and *stable non-vote*, respectively – both effects are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Overall, it seems that *sophistication* conditions the impact of Δ *distance* but only on the likelihood of voting again for the same party (stable vote) or not voting for the same parties (stable non-vote).

Table 2: The Conditional Impact of Sophistication on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable vote		Stable non-vote		Switching away		Switching towards	
Sophistication	-0.03	(0.08)	0.51	(0.09)***	-0.26	(0.07)***	-0.23	(0.07)***
Δ distance	-1.70	(0.34)***	3.05	(0.42)***	-0.23	(0.25)	-1.12	(0.24)***
Sophistication* Δ distance	-0.55	(0.25)*	0.62	(0.31)*	0.01	(0.19)	-0.08	(0.17)

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. The marginal effects are percentage points. See Table B in appendix for the full results of the multinomial logistic regression.

In Table 3, we examine whether the status of a party as being in *government* or in opposition conditions the impact of Δ *distance*. The results do not offer support for our hypothesis (*H3a*). First, in line with the results presented in Table 1 and 2, voters are not more likely to switch away from a party if the party moves away from the voter, even if that party was in government. However, it does seems that voters are more likely to switch parties when they voted for a party in government at the last election – everything else being equal. Second, it appears that shifts of parties in government do not trigger switching towards these parties. This becomes clear when summing the marginal effects of Δ *distance* (-1.70) and *government**Δ *distance* (1.55) which equals -0.15 and is not statistically significant. However, shifts from the part of parties in government are influential for the likelihood of a *stable vote* given the interaction of *government* and Δ *distance* that is negative and statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 3: The Conditional Impact of Government Participation on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable vote		Stable non-vote		Switching away		Switching towards	
Government	5.68	(0.16)***	-7.62	(0.21)***	2.18	(0.12)***	-0.23	(0.12)
Δ distance	-2.36	(0.25)***	4.33	(0.31)***	-0.26	(0.20)	-1.70	(0.17)***
Government* Δ distance	-1.01	(0.38)**	-0.13	(0.48)	-0.40	(0.29)	1.55	(0.30)***

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. The marginal effects are percentage points. See Table C in appendix for the full results of the multinomial logistic regression.

In Table 4, we add even more detail and interact the status of a party as being in a *single-party government* with Δ *distance* and being part of a *coalition government* with Δ *distance* (the reference category being in opposition). The results are consistent with the general government results in Table 3. With respect to the likelihood of switching away (*H3b*) the impact of Δ *distance* is not different for parties that are in a single-party government or in a coalition government compared to what holds for parties in opposition – both effects are not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The results related to the likelihood of switching towards a party, by contrast, do provide some support for our hypothesis. The interaction effect of *single-party government* with Δ *distance* is negative and not statistically significant while the interaction effect of *coalition government* with Δ *distance* is positive and statistically significant. This indicates that a voter is not more likely to switch towards a party in a coalition government when the latter moves towards her but that she is more likely to do so when the party is part of a single-party government or when the party is in opposition. In addition, the interaction effects of Δ *distance* with *single-party* and *coalition* are in the expected directions for *stable vote as well*, indicating that the impact of parties' shifts on *stable vote* is stronger under single-party governments. These results provide some support for the rationale that it is more difficult for voters to attribute political responsibility to parties within coalition governments than what holds for single-party governments.

Table 4: The Conditional Impact of Single-Party and Coalition Governments on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable vote		**Stable non-vote**		**Switching away**		**Switching towards**	
Single-party	9.06	(0.42)***	-11.75	(0.60)***	4.00	(0.33)***	-1.31	(0.38)**
Coalition	4.96	(0.18)***	-6.80	(0.22)***	1.90	(0.13)***	-0.05	(0.13)
Δ **distance**	-2.45	(0.25)***	4.42	(0.30)***	-0.30	(0.19)	-1.68	(0.17)***
Single-party								
*Δ **distance**	-1.84	(0.93)*	2.63	(1.63)	0.66	(1.04)	-1.46	(1.54)
Coalition*								
Δ **distance**	-1.14	(0.39)**	-0.08	(0.49)	-0.42	(0.29)	1.64	(0.30)***

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. See Table D in appendix for the full results of the multinomial logistic regression.

6. DISCUSSION

The aim of this paper was to disentangle more precisely the mechanisms that cause voters to switch parties from one election to another. By doing so, we move research focusing on the link between political sophistication and volatility further. Furthermore, by linking parties' ideological shifts to individual-level volatility, we also add to the literature on voter-party responsiveness. This line of research is still mostly limited to the impact of parties' shifts on voters' perceptions instead of the behavioural consequences thereof.

The results of our analyses provide some support for our hypotheses. Most importantly, parties' ideological shifts fosters both switching and stability of voting behaviour. However, it seems that switching is not only the consequence of a single party moving away from voters in between elections. Switching seems rather the result of the interplay between voters and multiple parties. A party that is drifting away from voters combined to the presence of another party that moves towards the voters seem particularly important for explaining whether voters switch parties. This result goes counter the conception of *'floating voters'* who switch randomly. Instead, voters do respond to how parties are perceived to move ideologically, which indicates that switching parties is to a certain extent a tool for voters to hold parties accountable.

Obviously, this study suffers from a number of limitations. First, our focus on parties' shifts necessitates the reliance on a dataset that covers a substantial number of parties. We hence chose to use the data from a large comparative dataset, the CSES. The cross-sectional nature of the election studies in this dataset, however, implies that we have to rely on a recall question for investigating volatility. We hence have to acknowledge that we most likely underestimate the true amount of volatility. In the absence of large comparative datasets of election studies of a panel format, however, the use of recall data is the only way out (Dassonneville & Dejaeghere, 2014).

Second, while we do measure shifts in parties' ideological positions, we cannot take into account whether voters as well have moved ideologically. It is thus possible that we over-estimate the impact of *distance* in the empirical models since this variable may also capture the fact that voters have moved away from their party. Despite these limitations, we think our results are insightful and add to our knowledge in the fields of volatility as well as responsiveness. More research, however, is needed on the nature of the mechanism and more

studies should validate whether our results hold if panel-data could be used for investigating our research questions.

7. APPENDIX

In this section, we detail the computation of the control variables. *Age* is computed as the age of a respondent and ranges between 18 and 100. *Men* is a dummy variable coded one for men and zero for women. *Education* is an ordinal variable that ranges from 1 to 8. *Party identification* is an ordinal variable coded 0 for non-partisans, 1 for respondents who feel not very close to their party, 2 for those who feel somewhat close, and 3 for those who feel very close to their party. *Democratic satisfaction* is an ordinal variable coded 0 for respondents who are not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in their country, 1 for those who are not very satisfied, 2 for those who are fairly satisfied, and 3 for those who are very satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. *Political efficacy* is the average of two questions: *who is in power can make a difference* and *who people vote for makes a difference*. This variable ranges from one to five. The question used in the CSES dataset to locate respondents' left-right position is: "In politics people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?".

REFERENCES

Adams, J., Clark, M., Ezrow, L., & Glasgow, G. (2004). Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to Past Election Results? *British Journal of Political Science*, *34*(4), 589–610.

Adams, J., Ezrow, L., & Leiter, D. (2012). Partisan Sorting and Niche Parties in Europe. *West European Politics*, *35*(6), 1272–1294.

Adams, J., Ezrow, L., & Somer-topcu, Z. (2011). Is Anybody Listening ? Evidence That Voters Do Not Respond to European Parties' Policy Statements During Elections. *American Journal of Political Science*, *55*(2), 370–382.

Adams, J., Ezrow, L., & Somer-Topcu, Z. (2014). Do Voters Respond to Party Manifestos or to a Wider Information Environment? An Analysis of Mass-Elite Linkages on European Integration. *American Journal of Political Science*, in press.

Adams, J., & Somer-Topcu, Z. (2009). Policy Adjustment by Parties in Response to Rival Parties' Policy Shifts: Spatial Theory and the Dynamics of Party Competition in Twenty-Five Post-War Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science*, *39*(4), 825-846.

Albright, J. J. (2009). Does Political Knowledge Erode Party Attachments?: A Review of the Cognitive Mobilization Thesis. *Electoral Studies*, *28*(2), 248–260.

Arnold, C., & Franklin, M. N. (2012). Introduction: Issue Congruence and Political Responsiveness. *West European Politics*, *35*(6), 1217–1225.

Bartolini, S., & Mair, P. (1990). *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: The Stabilisation of European Electorates, 1885-1985*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berelson, B. R., Lazarsfeld, P. F., & McPhee, W. N. (1954). *Voting. A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press.

Budge, I. (1994). A New Spatial Theory of Party Competition: Uncertainty, Ideology and Policy Equilibria Viewed Comparatively and Temporally. *British Journal of Political Science*, *24*(4), 443–467.

Campbell, A., Converse, P. E., Miller, W. E., & Stokes, D. (1964). *The American Voter: An Abridgment* (p. 302). New York: Wiley.

Converse, P. E. (1962). Information Flow and the Stability of Partisan Attitudes. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, *26*(4), 578–599.

Costello, R., Thomassen, J., & Rosema, M. (2012). European Parliament Elections and Political Representation: Policy Congruence between Voters and Parties. *West European Politics*, *35*(6), 1226–1248.

Dalton, R. J. (1985). Political Parties and Political Representation: Party Supporters and Party Elites in Nine Nations. *Comparative Political Studies*, *18*(3), 267–299.

Dalton, Russell J. (1984). Cognitive Mobilization and Partisan Dealignment in Advanced Industrial Democracies. *Journal of Politics*, *46*(2), 264–284.

Dalton, Russell J. (2012). Apartisans and the Changing German Electorate. *Electoral Studies*, *31*(1), 35–45.

Dalton, Russell J. (2013). *The Apartisan American: Dealignment and Changing Electoral Politics*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Dalton, Russell J., & Wattenberg, M. P. (2002). *Parties without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dassonneville, R. (2012). Electoral Volatility, Political Sophistication, Trust and Efficacy: A Study on Changes in Voter Preferences during the Belgian Regional Elections of 2009. *Acta Politica*, *47*(1), 18–41.

Dassonneville, R. (2014). Political Sophistication and Vote Intention Switching. The Timing of Electoral Volatility in the 2009 German Election Campaign. *German Politics*, in press.

Dassonneville, R., & Dejaeghere, Y. (2014). Bridging the Ideological Space. A Cross-National Analysis of the Distance of Party Switching. *European Journal of Political Research*, *53*(3), 580–599.

Dassonneville, R., Hooghe, M., & Vanhoutte, B. (2012). Age, Period and Cohort Effects in the Decline of Party Identification in Germany: An Analysis of a Two Decade Panel Study in Germany (1992–2009). *German Politics*, *21*(2), 209–227.

Dassonneville, R., Hooghe, M., & Vanhoutte, B. (2014). Partisan Dealignment in Germany: A Rejoinder to Russell Dalton. *German Politics*, *23*(1-2), 145-155.

De Vries, C. E., & Giger, N. (2014). Holding Governments Accountable? Individual Heterogeneity in Performance Voting. *European Journal of Political Research*, *53*(2), 345–362.

Delli Carpini, M. S., & Keeter, S. (1996). *What Americans Know about Politics and Why it Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Downs, A. (1957). *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Ezrow, L., De Vries, C., Steenbergen, M., & Edwards, E. (2010). Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation: Do Parties Respond to the Mean Voter Position or to Their Supporters? *Party Politics*, *17*(3), 275–301.

Fisher, S. D., & Hobolt, S. B. (2010). Coalition Government and Electoral Accountability. *Electoral Studies*, *29*(3), 358–369.

Fortunato, D., & Stevenson, R. T. (2013). Perceptions of Partisan Ideologies: The Effect of Coalition Participation. *American Journal of Political Science*, *57*(2), 459–477.

Gomez, B. T., & Wilson, M. J. (2001). Political Sophistication and Economic Voting in the American Electorate: A Theory of Heterogeous Attribution. *American Journal of Political Science*, *45*(4), 899–914.

Granberg, D., & Holmberg, S. (1990). The Berelson Paradox Reconsidered Intention-Behavior Changers in U.S. and Swedish Election Campaigns. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *54*(4), 530–550.

King, G., & Roberts, M. (2012). How Robust Standard Errors Expose Methodological Problems They Do Not Fix. Retrieved from http://j.mp/InK5jU

Kuhn, U. (2009). Stability and Change in Party Preference. *Swiss Political Science Review*, *15*(3), 463–494.

Lachat, R. (2007). *A Heterogeneous Electorate. Political Sophistication, Predisposition Strength and the Voting Decision Process*. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Laver, M., & Shepsle, K. A. (1996). *Making and Breaking Governments: Cabinets and Legislatures in Parliamentary Democracies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Marthaler, S. (2008). The Paradox of the Politically-Sophisticated Partisan: The French Case. *West European Politics*, *31*(5), 937–959.

Martin, L. W., & Vanberg, G. (2014). Parties and Policymaking in Multiparty Governments: The Legislative Median, Ministerial Autonomy, and the Coalition Compromise. *American Journal of Political Science*, in press.

Powell, B. G., & Whitten, G. D. (1993). A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting : Taking Account of the Political Context. *American Journal of Political Science*, *37*(2), 391–414.

Powell, G. B. J. (2000). *Elections as Instruments of Democracy - Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Przeworski, A., Stokes, S. C., & Manin, B. (1999). *Democracy, Accountability and Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sartori, G. (1968). Representational Systems. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, *13*, 470–475.

Somer-Topcu, Z. (2009). Timely Decisions: The Effects of Past National Elections on Party Policy Change. *Journal of Politics*, *71*(01), 238-248.

Tavits, M. (2007). Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*, *51*(1), 151–165.

Tsebelis, G. (2002). *Veto Players - How Political Institutions Work*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Van Der Eijk, C., & Niemöller, B. (1983). *Electoral Change in the Netherlands*. Amsterdam: CT Press.

Van der Meer, T., Lubbe, R., Van Elsas, E., Elff, M., & Van der Brug, W. (2012). Bounded Volatility in the Dutch Electoral Battlefield: A Panel Study on the Structure of Changing Vote Intentions in the Netherlands during 2006-2010. *Acta Politica*, *47*(4), 333–355.

Van der Meer, T. W. G., Elsas, E. V., Lubbe, R., & Van der Brug, W. (2014). Are Volatile Voters Erratic, Whimsical or Seriously Picky? A Panel Study of 58 Waves into the Nature of Electoral Volatility (The Netherlands 2006-2010). *Party Politics*, in press.

Waldahl, R., & Aardal, B. (2000). The Accuracy of Recalled Previous Voting: Evidence from the Norwegian Election Study. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, *23*(4), 373–389.

Williams, L. K. (2014). It's All Relative: Spatial Positioning of Parties and Ideological Shifts. *European Journal of Political Research*, in press.

Zaller, J. (2000). Floating Voters in U.S. Presidential Elections, 1948-2000. In W. E. Saris & P. M. Sniderman (Eds.), *Studies in Public Opinion: Attitudes, Nonattitudes, Measurement Error, and Change* (pp. 166–214). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zelle, C. (1995). Social Dealignment versus Political Frustration: Contrasting Explanations of the Floating Vote in Germany. *European Journal of Political Research*, *27*(3), 319–345.

Appendix

Table A : The Impact of Δ Distance on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable non-vote vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching away vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching towards vs Stable vote (reference)	
Δ distance	0.383	(0.027)***	0.245	(0.042)***	-0.027	(0.043)
Distance $_{t-1}$	0.552	(0.008)***	0.165	(0.013)***	0.083	(0.013)***
Age	-0.002	(0.000)***	-0.012	(0.001)***	-0.013	(0.001)***
Men	0.017	(0.013)	-0.025	(0.033)	-0.061	(0.034)
Education	0.025	(0.004)***	0.040	(0.011)***	0.041	(0.011)***
Partisan	-2.513	(0.038)***	-1.105	(0.031)***	-0.670	(0.022)***
Democratic satisfaction	0.033	(0.010)**	-0.097	(0.026)***	-0.072	(0.027)**
Political efficacy	0.020	(0.007)**	-0.047	(0.018)**	-0.064	(0.018)***
Political sophistication	0.035	(0.026)	0.044	(0.065)	0.067	(0.066)
Political sophistication^2	-0.007	(0.010)	-0.040	(0.025)	-0.049	(0.025)
Pseudo R^2	0.208					
AIC	13,8842.266					
N respondent-party dyads	126,296					
N respondents	20,679					

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. Election-specific fixed effects included (not shown).

Table B : The Conditional Impact of Sophistication on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable non-vote vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching away vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching towards vs Stable vote (reference)	
Δ distance	0.291	(0.048)***	0.166	(0.075)*	-0.053	(0.024)*
Sophistication*Δ distance	0.083	(0.035)*	0.071	(0.056)	0.083	(0.013)***
Sophistication	0.017	(0.010)	-0.054	(0.024)*	-0.013	(0.001)***
Distance $_{t-1}$	0.552	(0.008)***	0.165	(0.013)***	-0.060	(0.034)
Age	-0.002	(0.000)***	-0.012	(0.001)***	0.041	(0.011)***
Men	0.017	(0.013)	-0.024	(0.033)	-0.671	(0.022)***
Education	0.026	(0.004)***	0.041	(0.010)***	-0.070	(0.027)**
Partisan	-2.513	(0.038)***	-1.106	(0.031)***	-0.063	(0.018)***
Democratic satisfaction	0.033	(0.010)**	-0.096	(0.026)***	-0.053	(0.024)*
Political efficacy	0.020	(0.007)**	-0.047	(0.018)**	0.083	(0.013)***
Pseudo R^2	0.208					
AIC	13,8843.527					
N respondent-party dyads	126,296					
N respondents	20,679					

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. Election-specific fixed effects included (not shown).

Table C : The Conditional Impact of Government Participation on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable non-vote vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching away vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching towards vs Stable vote (reference)	
Δ distance	0.414	(0.036)***	0.248	(0.058)***	-0.137	(0.054)*
Government*Δ distance	0.110	(0.055)*	0.017	(0.086)	0.492	(0.091)***
Government	-0.892	(0.024)***	-0.192	(0.035)***	-0.720	(0.037)***
Distance $_{t-1}$	0.553	(0.009)***	0.166	(0.013)***	0.080	(0.013)***
Age	-0.001	(0.000)**	-0.012	(0.001)***	-0.012	(0.001)***
Men	0.020	(0.013)	-0.024	(0.033)	-0.056	(0.034)
Education	0.025	(0.004)***	0.040	(0.011)***	0.040	(0.011)***
Partisan	-2.505	(0.038)***	-1.110	(0.031)***	-0.676	(0.022)***
Democratic satisfaction	0.054	(0.010)***	-0.081	(0.026)**	-0.044	(0.027)
Political efficacy	0.019	(0.007)**	-0.048	(0.018)**	-0.063	(0.018)***
Political sophistication	0.036	(0.027)	0.045	(0.065)	0.071	(0.066)
Political sophistication^2	-0.008	(0.010)	-0.040	(0.025)	-0.051	(0.025)*
Pseudo R^2	0.219					
AIC	136,983.947					
N respondent-party dyads	126,296					
N respondents	20,679					

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. Election-specific fixed effects included (not shown).

Table D : The Conditional Impact of Single-Party and Coalition Governments on the Likelihood of Switching Parties (or not)

	Stable non-vote vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching away vs Stable vote (reference)		Switching towards vs Stable vote (reference)	
Δ distance	0.428	(0.036)***	0.250	(0.058)***	-0.120	(0.053)*
Single-party government*Δ distance	0.305	(0.131)*	0.394	(0.276)	-0.140	(0.416)
Coalition government*Δ distance	0.127	(0.057)*	0.027	(0.088)	0.529	(0.092)***
Single-party government	-1.411	(0.064)***	-0.176	(0.089)*	-1.382	(0.107)***
Coalition government	-0.786	(0.026)***	-0.170	(0.038)***	-0.595	(0.040)***
Distance $_{t-1}$	0.554	(0.009)***	0.167	(0.013)***	0.081	(0.013)***
Age	-0.001	(0.000)**	-0.012	(0.001)***	-0.013	(0.001)***
Men	0.018	(0.013)	-0.024	(0.033)	-0.058	(0.034)
Education	0.025	(0.004)***	0.040	(0.011)***	0.039	(0.011)***
Partisan	-2.498	(0.038)***	-1.109	(0.031)***	-0.668	(0.022)***
Democratic satisfaction	0.053	(0.010)***	-0.081	(0.026)**	-0.045	(0.027)
Political efficacy	0.019	(0.007)**	-0.048	(0.018)**	-0.063	(0.018)***
Political sophistication	0.036	(0.027)	0.045	(0.065)	0.071	(0.066)
Political sophistication^2	-0.007	(0.010)	-0.040	(0.025)	-0.051	(0.025)*
Pseudo R^2	0.220					
AIC	136,838.856					
N individuals	126,296					
N elections	20,679					

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05. Standard errors in parentheses are robust for 20,679 individual-clusters. Election-specific fixed effects included (not shown).